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PATENT  
Customer No. 22,852  
Attorney Docket No. 08726.0018-00

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re Application of:

Frank W. RATLIFF

Application No.: 10/617,693

Filed: July 14, 2003

For: HEAT PUMP SYSTEM

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)  
) Group Art Unit: 3744  
)  
) Examiner: C. Jiang  
)  
)  
) Confirmation No.: 3739

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Sir:

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b)**

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.56 and 1.97(b), Applicant brings to the attention of the Examiner the documents on the attached Form PTO/SB/08. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed after the events recited in Section 1.97(b) but, to the undersigned's knowledge, before the mailing date of either a final Office Action, Quayle Action, or a Notice of Allowance. Under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(c), this Information Disclosure Statement includes a certification as specified by Section 1.97(e).

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner consider the listed documents and indicate that they were considered by making appropriate notations on the attached form.

Copies of the listed non-U.S. patent documents are attached, as is a copy of an English language version of a Search Report from the European Patent Office in a counterpart application, setting forth the relevance of the non-English documents.

Applicant does not necessarily endorse the conclusions set forth in the Search Report.

Each document listed in this Information Disclosure Statement was first cited in a communication from the European Patent Office in a counterpart international application, and this Information Disclosure Statement is being filed within thirty days of the mailing date of that communication. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.704(d), no negative patent term adjustment consequences will apply to this Information Disclosure Statement.

This submission does not represent that a search has been made or that no better art exists and does not constitute an admission that each or all of the listed documents are material or constitute "prior art." If the Examiner applies any of the documents as prior art against any claim in the application and Applicant determines that the cited documents do not constitute "prior art" under United States law, Applicant reserves the right to present to the U.S. Patent Office the relevant facts and law regarding the appropriate status of such documents.

Applicant further reserves the right to take appropriate action to establish the patentability of the disclosed invention over the listed documents, should one or more of the documents be applied against the claims of the present application.

If there is any fee due in connection with the filing of this Statement, please charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

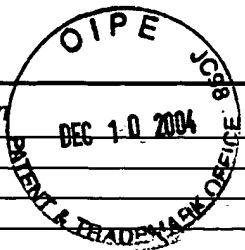
Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,  
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: December 10, 2004

By: 

Roland G. McAndrews  
Reg. No. 41,450



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|---|---|----|---|--------------------------|------------------|
| IDS Form PTO/SB/08: Substitute for form 1449A/PTO   |   |    |   | <b>Complete if Known</b> |                  |
| <b>INFORMATION DISCLOSURE<br/>STATEMENT BY APPLICANT</b><br><br>(Use as many sheets as necessary) |   |    |   | Application Number       | 10/617,693       |
|   |   |    |   | Filing Date              | July 14, 2003    |
|   |   |    |   | First Named Inventor     | Frank W. RATLIFF |
|   |   |    |   | Art Unit                 | 3744             |
|   |   |    |   | Examiner Name            | C. Jiang         |
| Sheet   | 1 | of | 1 | Attorney Docket Number   | 08726.0018-00    |

| U.S. PATENTS AND PUBLISHED U.S. PATENT APPLICATIONS |                          |  |  |  |   |
|---|--------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Examiner<br>Initials                                | Cite<br>No. <sup>1</sup> | Document Number                          | Issue or<br>Publication Date<br>MM-DD-YYYY | Name of Patentee or<br>Applicant of Cited Document | Pages, Columns, Lines, Where<br>Relevant Passages or Relevant<br>Figures Appear |
|   |                          | Number-Kind Code <sup>2</sup> (if known) |  |  |   |
|   |                          | US-2,411,347                             | 11-19-1946                                 | Trumpler   |   |
|   |                          | US-5,761,921                             | 06-09-1998                                 | Hori et al.  |   |
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|   |                          |  |  |  |   |

| FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS |                          |   |                                |  |  |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------|
| Examiner<br>Initials     | Cite<br>No. <sup>1</sup> | Foreign Patent Document   | Publication Date<br>MM-DD-YYYY | Name of Patentee or<br>Applicant of Cited Document | Pages, Columns, Lines,<br>Where Relevant<br>Passages or Relevant<br>Figures Appear | Translation <sup>6</sup> |
|                          |                          | Country Code <sup>3</sup> Number <sup>4</sup> Kind Code <sup>5</sup> (if known) |                                |  |  |                          |
|                          |                          | DE 198 13 220 A1  | 09-30-1999                     | Germany  |  |                          |
|                          |                          | FR 2 457 468  | 12-19-1980                     | France   |  |                          |
|                          |                          | JP 57-122109  | 07-29-1982                     | Japan  |  | Abstract                 |
|                          |                          | JP 61-96370   | 05-15-1986                     | Japan  |  |                          |
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|                          |                          |   |                                |  |  |                          |
|                          |                          |   |                                |  |  |                          |

| NON PATENT LITERATURE DOCUMENTS |                          |   |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Examiner<br>Initials            | Cite<br>No. <sup>1</sup> | Include name of the author (in CAPITAL LETTERS), title of the article (when appropriate), title of the item<br>(book, magazine, journal, serial, symposium, catalog, etc.), date, page(s), volume-issue number(s),<br>publisher, city and/or country where published. | Translation <sup>6</sup> |
|                                 |                          | International Search Report for International Application No. PCT/US2004/020664, November 26, 2004.   |                          |
|                                 |                          | Written Opinion of the International Searching Authority, November 26, 2004.  |                          |

|                       |  |                    |  |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| Examiner<br>Signature |  | Date<br>Considered |  |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------|--|

EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.